

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and following remarks, reconsideration of the rejections contained in the Office Action of October 18, 2004 is respectfully requested.

In response to Applicants' Amendment submitted June 30, 2004, the Examiner finally rejected claims 17-35 as being unpatentable over either Lenkersdorfer '844 or Sandhu et al. '642 in view of Watanabe et al. '368. However, in view of the above proposed amendments, and the following comments, it is respectfully submitted that the claims as now presented are in condition for allowance.

The present application is a divisional of parent application 09/897,918, U.S. Patent 6,609,950. In that application, a response was filed January 17, 2003 that substantively placed the application into condition for allowance. This response included method claims 33-42. Independent method claim 33 included the features of bringing the substrate to be polished into contact with a polishing surface of a polishing table, polishing a first layer of the substrate while supplying a first polishing liquid, cleaning the polishing surface, polishing the second layer of the substrate while supplying a second polishing liquid after the cleaning, controlling the attitude of the substrate during polishing, and extending the substrate outwardly of the outer periphery of the polishing surface.

New independent claims 36, 37, 40 and 43 have been drafted by taking into consideration the allowed claims of the parent application. Thus, these claims include, essentially, the following aspects:

Claim 36

a liquid supply nozzle for supplying a first polishing liquid while polishing the first layer, and for supplying a second polishing liquid while polishing the second layer

a first nozzle for providing water toward said polishing surface for cleaning said polishing surface after polishing the first layer and before polishing the second layer

a thickness measurement device for determining an end point of polishing of said the layer, said thickness measurement device being positioned at an outer peripheral portion of said polishing table

a second nozzle for providing water toward the surface of the substrate for cleaning the surface after being polished

Claim 37

a liquid supply nozzle for supplying a first polishing liquid while polishing the first layer, and for supplying a second polishing liquid while polishing the second layer

a first nozzle for providing water toward said polishing surface for cleaning said polishing surface after polishing the first layer and before polishing the second layer

a thickness measurement device for determining an end point of polishing of the first layer, said thickness measurement device being positioned at an outer peripheral portion of said polishing table

a second nozzle for providing water toward the surface of the substrate for cleaning the surface after being polished

Claim 40

a liquid supply nozzle for supplying a first polishing liquid while polishing the first layer, and for supplying a second polishing liquid while polishing the second layer

a first nozzle for providing water toward said polishing surface for cleaning said polishing surface after polishing the first layer and before polishing the second layer

a thickness measurement device for determining an end point of polishing of the first layer, said thickness measurement device being positioned at an outer peripheral portion of said polishing table

Claim 43

a liquid supply nozzle for supplying a polishing liquid while polishing the first layer, and while polishing the second layer

a nozzle for providing water toward said polishing surface for cleaning said polishing surface after polishing the first layer and before polishing the second layer

a thickness measurement device for determining an end point of polishing of said first layer, said thickness measurement device being positioned at an outer peripheral portion of said polishing table

Thus, clear distinctions are apparent between the independent claims now presented and the references cited by the Examiner.

For example, neither Sandhu et al. nor Lenkersdorfer discloses or suggests a liquid supply nozzle for supplying a first polishing liquid, a first nozzle for providing water and a second nozzle for providing water as recited in claim 36 or 37. Indeed, neither discloses or suggests even both the liquid supply nozzle and the additional nozzle as recited in each of claims 40 and 43.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present invention as now reflected by new claims 36-43 clearly patentably distinguishes over each of Lenkersdorfer, Sandhu et al. and Watanabe et al. As such, it is respectfully submitted that entry of the above amendments at this time is appropriate, as it places the present application into immediate condition for allowance.

It is further noted that the above amendments were not earlier submitted, because, until the last rejection, it was not deemed that such changes were necessary. This, however, should not be taken as acquiescence to the rejections made by the Examiner. The above proposal has simply been made as an expedient toward obtaining the allowance of the present application, based upon the prosecution of the parent application. Accordingly, entry of the above amendments and allowance of the present application is respectfully requested.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and the Examiner is requested to pass the case to issue. If the Examiner should have any comments or suggestions to help speed the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned representative.

Respectfully submitted,

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